

From: Gene Vosberg [vosberg@wrahome.com]
Sent: Thursday, August 30, 2001 6:45 PM
To: Seifert, Marianne
Subject: Fee for Food Handler's Cards

Dear Marianne:

Thank you for graciously including us in your research on this matter. We appreciate the recognition and your willingness to consider us a partner in the task of reducing the incidents of food borne illness in our state. Food safety is our industry's # 1 priority.

Our strong position on the fee of the food handler card is that we do not want it to increase. Of the people who are applying for a food handler's card, most are students or are new workers just entering the workforce. It is a hardship for them to lay out any funds before starting work, regardless of the amount. We do not want to see the fee raised at this time, particularly since we've found the eight dollar amount to be sufficient for administering the training of safe food handling and testing in a video format. We've now trained and tested over 26,000 individuals in King County since we began the program, with a high level of knowledge retention.

We can also appreciate the health districts around the state who find the eight dollar fee to be insufficient for the training they are administering. We, too, could not provide the classroom training they undertake without incurring substantial losses. My staff has offered our program to most, if not all local county health districts, asking that they consider us to be their partners in helping educate the workforce in food safety. In more than several cases we were told that the Food Handler Card Program was a revenue source which they did not want to share, a fact that we found offensive since the food handler cards were never intended for that purpose. It is disgusting now to learn that some of those counties who rejected our offer for economic reasons are now asking for a raise in the fees to maintain parity. This is terrible news.

In these pressing economic times, it is important that we all work together to reduce costs and limit spending. This is no less important in government than it is in business. The good news is we've found a way to do it and simply ask that we be included. We've proven in King County that we are not part of the problem - we can be part of the solution.

Thank you again for seeking our opinion and counsel,

Respectfully,

Gene Vosberg, FMP
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